PFLAG
Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

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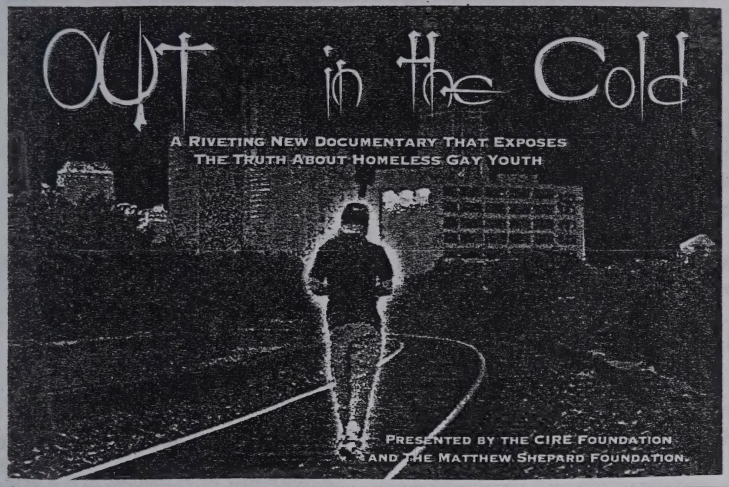
Keeping Families Strong April, 2003


Out in the Cold
A Riveting New Documentary That Exposes
The Truth About Homeless Gay Youth
Presented by the CIRE Foundation
and The Matthew Shepard Foundation

OUT in the Cold — PFLAG Sponsors Film

PFLAG Colorado Springs will sponsor the showing of *OUT in the Cold*, a film about the plight of gay, homeless youth, on Saturday, April 12th at All Souls Unitarian Church, 730 North Tejon Street, at 7:00 p.m. The showing is a joint project of PFLAG and Inside/Out Youth Services, a local non-profit organization that has provided a safe meeting place and recreational activities for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth in Colorado Springs for over ten years.

Refreshments will be served after the movie. Admission is free, and voluntary contributions to Inside/Out Youth Services will be accepted.

OUT in the Cold was produced and directed by Eric Criswell of Denver and Martin Begodne, Los Angeles director of the award winning documentary *Journey to a Hate Free Millennium* and *Making Babies: Gay and Lesbian Baby Boom.*

Director Eric Criswell will introduce the film and will participate in a discussion with the audience following the screening.

(Continued on page 3)

Local Student Leads "Day of Silence—Night of Noise"

As reported in the February newsletter, the Lewis Palmer High School Gay Straight Alliance (GSA), is finalizing plans for the "Day of Silence – Night of Noise" on April 9.

Student Leader Shines. The following is an excerpt from an article in *Community Vision*, a publication of the Pride Center (PPGLCC):

(Continued on page 3)

ALERT! ALERT!

PFLAG
MEETING DATE
AND
LOCATION CHANGES

APRIL
CHAPTER
MEETING

TUESDAY
APRIL 15TH

7:00 P.M.

508 NORTH
TEJON STREET

New Location! New Date! The PFLAG Chapter meetings are moving to The Dwelling Place – on the third Tuesday of the month.

The next PFLAG meeting will take place on April 15, 2003, at the Dwelling Place, 508North Tejon Street. Please note that this is the third Tuesday of the month.

PFLAG has met at the Pikes Peak Justice and Peace Center (PPJPC), located in a historic firehouse at 29 South Institute Street, since July of 2002, but a change in the status of that building will force both PPJPC and PFLAG to relocate. The fact that PFLAG meet-

(Continued on page 2)

This newsletter is published by the Colorado Springs Chapter of PFLAG (Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).

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Write us at CSPflag@aol.com
Website: www.tde.com/~pflagcos
PFLAG National Office website:
http://www.pflag.org

Call Karen at 634-4433 by April 24, 2003 if you have a contribution for the May newsletter.

PFLAG Meetings Moved to The Dwelling Place (cont.)

ings have been poorly attended since they were moved from All Souls Unitarian Church to the firehouse has prompted PFLAG's board of directors to seek a more central, downtown location for the monthly meeting.

The Dwelling Place is operated by nearby First Congregational Church, one of the city's first open and affirming congregations. The Dwelling Place is a storefront property on Tejon Street, not far from Colorado College.

PFLAG chapter members will be glad to hear that all the hard work done by PFLAG volunteers to help renovate the old fire station for use by PPJPC and PFLAG will not go to waste. There is a plan to leave the building in place where it now stands, to be used by the Colorado Springs Fire Department as a fire department museum.

PFLAG wishes to thank the PPJPC for opening its space in the fire house facility to various community organizations, including PFLAG, for the past two and a half years.

Save the Date! Pridefest and Pride Parade June 29th!

THANK YOU to TDE Internet for providing our website: www.tde.com/~pflagcos
TDE Internet: (303) 455-4252

Spring Cleaning...

The following is a column written recently for the PFLAG chapter newsletter by Pat Smith, co-president of the Dallas chapter.

Ah, spring has sprung and of course with that comes spring cleaning...and closets...and cleaning out the closet...and coming out of the closet…

Speaking as somebody who knows, being "in the closet" is no fun. Imagine falling madly in love, your stomach does flips every time you see your special someone. But you can't tell anybody. You have to be quiet. Just because.

Before I came out, I never discussed my personal life with my family and most of my friends. It was as though that part of me didn't exist. I'd found a woman who I wanted to share my life with, and I couldn't talk about it. Just because.

I didn't want to lose my family, or friends. Been there, done that. Lost people who I thought were friends. They weren't.

I didn't fit in to their idea of who I should be.

Recently I heard a troubling story from a lesbian college student who just came out to her parents. They want her to be "normal". They want her to stop this nonsense. "What will people think?" Her parents vowed to change her. They threatened her. She doesn't fit into who they think she should be. Why can't she be like "everybody else"?

She is normal and like everyone else. And lesbian. She had to tell her parents who she is. She doesn't want to hide…"just because."

Coming out of the closet means having to deal with reality. It's daunting because the family has to deal with the loss of hopes and dreams that they believe now won't come true. But they can still come true.

The reality is, it just looks different from what they had expected. Some families disown children for not fitting into their idea of who they want their child to be.

The reality is, their child is lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgendered. And when the child comes out of that closet, the parents, family or friend goes into the closet.

The closet is not fun. It's lonely and constrictive.

Coming out is freeing.

It's all a process. Parents who come to PFLAG are making an effort to understand reality. They don't want to hide in a closet. They are accepting reality. PFLAG is here to help parents and families and friends deal with coming out of that closet. You don't have to stay in it "just because".

It takes a lot of guts to accept reality.

It takes a lot of guts to come to PFLAG.

It takes a lot of guts to say "I don't care what some people think...*nobody* is gonna take my child away from me!"

Cleaning out that closet is worth it.

Student Leader (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

"Her name is Morgan Weinert, and she is a 16-year old sophomore at Lewis Palmer High School. You may not know her yet, but after reading this you'll want to.

"Morgan founded the first Gay/ Straight Alliance (GSA) at Lewis Palmer High School, which this year will be hosting the national student led Day of Silence Project on April 9th. Students participating will remain silent for the entire school day and will pass out "speaking cards" explaining why.

"They are representing the thousands of GLBT students kept silent every day from fear of harassment or worse.

" And there's more. Morgan is also a representative of Colorado's Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN). She will be featured at the 5th Annual Leadership Conference 'Life Without Labels: I AM ME' on April 16th. This regional conference for GLBTQ students and their supportive allies will provide the chance to learn how to begin GSAs and improve existing programs.

"The work mentioned above is not only impressive, it is extremely important to the GLBT movement in the Pikes Peak region. At 16, Morgan is already proving to be a strong leader in our community and across the nation."

The "Night of Noise" will follow the Day of Silence at 5 p.m., when the GSA will host a public event with information tables and guest speakers/performers. PFLAG parent Bonnie Frum will organize the PFLAG table.

Lewis Palmer GSA can be contacted by sending e-mail to lphgsa@hotmail.com; for information on the conference, mail to conference@glsenco.org.

News From Inside/Out

Inside/Out has set the date for its Third Annual Golf Tournament, scheduled to take place on Saturday, June 14, 2003, at Valley Hi Golf Course in Colorado Springs.

This is a great opportunity for PFLAG members to network with Inside/Out and members of the gay community in Colorado Springs, by playing in the tournament and/or by volunteering to help at the course on the day of the tournament.

GOLF FORE YOUTH!

Last year the team of PFLAG dad Ed Flitton and his friend won the prize for the lowest score.

If they register before May 1, participants receive a reduced rate of $100 for 18 holes and $65 for 9 holes. Lunch, prizes, goodies, etc., are included!

Online registration is available at www.insideoutys.org. First 10 registrations online receive a free Inside/Out T-Shirt!

Or call Tasha at Inside/Out Youth Services, 719-328-1056.

Remember: you can also support the Inside/Out youth by purchasing King Soopers Gift Certificates at PFLAG meetings.

OUT in the Cold (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

Major funding for the filming of *OUT in the Cold* came from the Matthew Shepard Foundation, created in 1998 by Dennis and Judy Shepard to honor the memory of their son.

> *"My son was taken from me. I can't imagine how anyone would willingly throw away their own child."*
>
> *- Judy Shepard*
> *The Matthew Shepard Foundation*

"Rejected by family, condemned by society and facing verbal and physical abuse, many gay teems turn to the streets. Once there, they're forced to survive any way that they can" (narrative from the film).

It is estimated that, in some cities, up to 40 percent of homeless youth are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered. Filmed in Denver, Los Angeles and Indianapolis, this film takes us into the hidden lives of these kids.

OUT in the Cold is the first film devoted exclusively to this difficult subject. CIRE Foundation, Inc., the film's distributor, also provides a companion Educational Resource and Action package which includes a 25-minute version of the film and a guide for teachers and facilitators.

The educational component, geared toward middle school, high school and college students, sensitively steers students to explore their own perceptions of homelessness and what it feels like to be "different". For more information on the Educational Guide, contact CIRE at 720-887-4910 or info@cirefoundation.org.

PFLAG chapter members are encouraged to make this a special night to support PFLAG and Inside/Out by coming to the film and bringing their friends.

BULLETIN BOARD

Apr. 9—Day of Silence, Night of Noise
Lewis-Palmer High School GSA. Contact lphgsa@hotmail.com

April 12—*Out in the Cold*— 7:00 p.m. All Souls Unitarian Church, 730 North Tejon Street.

April 15– PFLAG Chapter Meeting
7:00 p.m., The Dwelling Place, 508 North Tejon Street, Colorado Springs.

June 29– Pride 2003 in Colorado Springs
Pride Parade, festival in the park, organized by the Pikes Peak Gay & Lesbian Community Center (PPGLCC)

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Bill Lets Doctors, Nurses Refuse To Treat Homosexuals

DENVER (AP) - State representatives have removed a provision protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination by health care workers. Rep. Don Lee, a Jefferson County Republican, took a run-of-the-mill measure dealing with agency regulations and amended it to remove protection for gays under rules set by the Medical Services Board. It was approved by the House Thursday.

Lee argued that gays don't have state legal claims against discrimination now and the rules would create a special protection for them. Senate Bill 88 passed on a 34-29 party-line vote, with a lone Republican, Rep. Gregg Rippy of Glenwood Springs, siding with Democrats.

An angry Rep. Jennifer Veiga, a Denver Democrat and House minority leader, said Lee's approach also would allow for discriminating against people who are older, believe in a certain religion, belong to an ethnic group or have a physical disability.

"Does it create a special protected class? It absolutely does not," Veiga said. "It provides some assurance to large sections of our society that they will get treatment."

Rep. Shawn Mitchell, a Broomfield Republican, said that any medical professional who chooses not to treat someone would be disciplined under medical ethics or have a lawsuit slapped against them. "They will be sued for medical incompetence, but not for political incorrectness," Mitchell said. Several Democrats argued that the rule change would be unconstitutional. In 1996, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Colorado's Amendment 2, which barred laws that protect homosexuals from discrimination.

"We went down this road in Colorado with Amendment 2," said Rep. Alice Madden, D-Boulder. "It wasn't a pretty trip."

KEEPING FAMILIES STRONG

A membership in PFLAG extends a helping hand to families who have gay members; provides educational material for families and the public; and offers a family voice that stands for equality and justice for all human beings. You can join at any time of the year. The current membership year extends from October 1, 2002 to September 30, 2003.

Name(s) of Member(s): _____

_____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Work Phone:** _____

e-mail: _____

Membership includes newsletter
____New member ____Renewing member

____Low Income	$5.00—$10.00
____Individual	$ 20
____Household	$30
____Supporting	$ 60
____Other Contribution	$_____
____Gift Membership (includes newsletter)	$ 10
Total	$_____

Make checks payable to Colorado Springs PFLAG and mail to P.O. Box 10076, Colorado Springs, CO 80932. Membership fee and contributions are tax deductible. All information will remain confidential. PFLAG is a 501(C) 3 nonprofit organization. If you need a receipt for tax purposes, please call 591-6793.